

Global Edmonton
By Duncan Thorne
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United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon welcomed an Edmonton armed-conflict expert today [W. Andy Knight, a University of Alberta political scientist,] as executive director of [the New York-based **Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect**].

(...) The centre has UN support but will work independently, doing research and lobbying at senior government levels, [Knight] said.

(...) He [admitted] the centre is deliberately independent of the UN because the tasks it will handle are so sensitive. "They don't want to implicate the UN in some of this work.["]

"For much of it of course we will try to get countries to embrace the concept of **responsibility to protect** ," [Mr. Knight declared]. "This is a concept that's pretty controversial in some countries. Particularly in developing countries they are concerned that this could be used as a means of allowing big countries to intervene in their internal affairs."

(...) Canada should itself be doing more to tackle conflicts in such countries as Sudan and Darfur, Knight said. "We've put a lot of energy into Afghanistan, which is good. But there are still lots of conflicts out there that need to be addressed. Canada has the potential to do a lot more in those areas."

(...) "It is a big challenging, daunting proposition to head up a centre like this," he [added]. "The weight of the responsibility is enormous." "We're talking about trying to save innocent people from being slaughtered in genocidal attacks, mass slaughter, crimes against humanity."

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